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Commission on the Status of Women
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Agenda item 3
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"

Azerbaijan, Bangladesh,* Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina,* Burkina Faso, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan,* Malaysia, Turkey and Uzbekistan:* draft resolution

Release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Recalling all its previous resolutions on the release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts,

Recalling also the relevant provisions contained in the instruments of international humanitarian law relative to the protection of the civilian population as such,

Taking into account the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 34/146 of 17 December 1979, which recognizes that everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person and that the taking of hostages is an offence of grave concern to the international community,

Reaffirming the commitments made in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[1] as well as in the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"[2] and the outcome document of the special session

* In accordance with rule 69 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

[1] See *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13).

[2] General Assembly resolutions S-23/2, annex, and S-23/3, annex.

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of the Assembly on children entitled "A world fit for children",[3] including the provisions therein regarding violence against women and children,

Recalling Commission on Human Rights resolutions 2001/38 of 23 April 2001[4] and 2003/40 of 23 April 2003[5] on hostage-taking, as well as General Assembly resolution 57/220 of 18 December 2002,

Recalling also Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000 on women, peace and security,

Expressing grave concern at the continuation of armed conflicts in many regions throughout the world and the human suffering and humanitarian emergencies they have caused,

Emphasizing that all forms of violence in areas of armed conflict committed against the civilian population as such, including taking women and children hostage, seriously contravene international humanitarian law, in particular as set out in the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949,[6]

Concerned that, despite the efforts of the international community, acts of hostage-taking in different forms and manifestations, inter alia, those committed by terrorists and armed groups, continue to take place and have even increased in many regions of the world,

Recognizing that hostage-taking calls for resolute, firm and concerted efforts on the part of the international community, in conformity with international humanitarian law and in accordance with international human rights standards, in order to bring such abhorrent practices to an end,

Expressing its strong belief that the rapid and unconditional release of women and children taken hostage in areas of armed conflict will promote the implementation of the noble goals enshrined in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, as well as the outcome document of the special session of the Assembly on children entitled "A world fit for children", including the provisions therein regarding violence against women and children,

1. *Reaffirms* that hostage-taking, wherever and by whomever committed, is an illegal act aimed at the destruction of human rights and is, under any circumstances, unjustifiable, including as a means to promote and protect human rights;

2. *Condemns* violent acts in contravention of international humanitarian law against the civilian population, as such, in areas of armed conflict, and calls for an effective response to such acts, in particular the immediate release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts;

3. *Also condemns* the consequences of hostage-taking, in particular torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, murder, rape,

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[3] General Assembly resolution S-27/2, annex.

[4] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2001, Supplement No. 3* (E/2001/23), chap. II, sect. A.

[5] *Ibid., 2003, Supplement No. 3* (E/2003/23), chap. II, sect. A.

[6] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, nos. 970-973.

slavery, and trafficking in women and children for the purpose of subjecting them to sexual exploitation, or imposing forced labour or services;

4. *Strongly urges* all parties to armed conflicts to respect fully the norms of international humanitarian law in armed conflict and to take all necessary measures for the protection of the civilian population, as such, and to release immediately all women and children who have been taken hostage;

5. *Urges* all parties to armed conflicts to provide safe unimpeded access to humanitarian assistance for those women and children in accordance with international humanitarian law;

6. *Stresses* both the need to put an end to impunity and the responsibility of all States to prosecute in accordance with international law those responsible for war crimes, including hostage-taking;

7. *Emphasizes* the importance of the access of relevant international organizations to accurate verifiable data so as to facilitate the release of hostages and, to this end, calls upon all parties to armed conflict to provide, and assist those organizations in gathering, maximum objective information in this regard;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure, within the context of the present resolution, the widest possible dissemination of relevant material, in particular that relating to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), within existing resources;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General and all relevant international organizations to use their capabilities and undertake efforts to facilitate the immediate release of civilian women and children who have been taken hostage;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fiftieth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, taking into account the information provided by States and relevant international organizations;

11. *Decides* to consider the question at its fiftieth session.